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# LETTER DATED 27 MAY 1998 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to resolution 1161 (1998) of 9 April 1998, by which the Security Council requested me to reactivate the International Commission of Inquiry, with the following mandate:

(a) To collect information and investigate reports relating to the sale, supply and shipment of arms and related matériel to former Rwandan government forces and militias in the Great Lakes region of central Africa, in violation of Security Council resolutions 918 (1994) of 17 May 1994, 997 (1995) of 9 June 1995 and 1011 (1995) of 16 August 1995;

(b) To identify parties aiding and abetting the illegal sale to or acquisition of arms by former Rwandan government forces and militias, contrary to the resolutions referred to above;

(c) To make recommendations relating to the illegal flow of arms in the Great Lakes region.

By paragraph 7 of that resolution, the Security Council recommended that the Commission resume its work as soon as possible and requested me to report to the Council on the reactivation of the Commission. The present letter is submitted pursuant to that request.

Following the adoption of resolution 1161 (1998), I requested Mr. Mahmoud Kassem (Egypt), who had served as Chairman of the International Commission of Inquiry in 1995 and 1996, to resume his functions in that capacity. I also requested the Governments of Pakistan, Switzerland and the United States of America to consider making available the services of officials to serve as members of the Commission.

As a result, I am pleased to report that the composition of the Commission is as follows:

Mr. Mahmoud Kassem (Egypt) (Chairman)
Brigadier-General Mujahid Alam (Pakistan)
Mr. Gilbert Barthe (Switzerland)
Mr. Mel Holt (United States of America)

The Commission will be assisted by a small staff.

Between 4 and 8 May 1998, the Chairman and members of the Commission convened at United Nations Headquarters for a series of briefings and consultations with the representatives of interested Member States, senior Secretariat officials and others in preparation for the resumption of their investigations. On 13 May 1998, the Commission re-established its base at the United Nations Office at Nairobi, where it has resumed its contacts in Kenya and with Governments of the countries of the Great Lakes region and others.

In accordance with resolution 1161 (1998), the activities of the Commission will be financed from the United Nations Trust Fund for Rwanda. As of 15 May 1998, the Secretariat had received donations totalling approximately $140,000 for the use of the Commission, ($100,000 from the Government of Belgium and $40,000 from the Government of Japan). Pledges of further contributions were made at the 3870th meeting of the Security Council, on 9 April 1998, when resolution 1161 (1998) was adopted, by the Governments of Belgium, Germany ($50,000), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (100,000 pounds sterling) and the United States ($100,000). During the visit of the Commission to New York, the representative of France indicated his Government's intention to contribute to the Trust Fund. The Government of Sweden has also pledged 500,000 Swedish kronor, or approximately $64,000, to support the work of the Commission.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Governments that have contributed to the Trust Fund and to renew my appeal to others to do so.

In accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution 1161 (1998), I will submit an interim report to the Council on the initial conclusions of the Commission within the next three months, to be followed by a final report containing its recommendations in November 1998.

I should be grateful if you would bring this matter to the attention of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

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